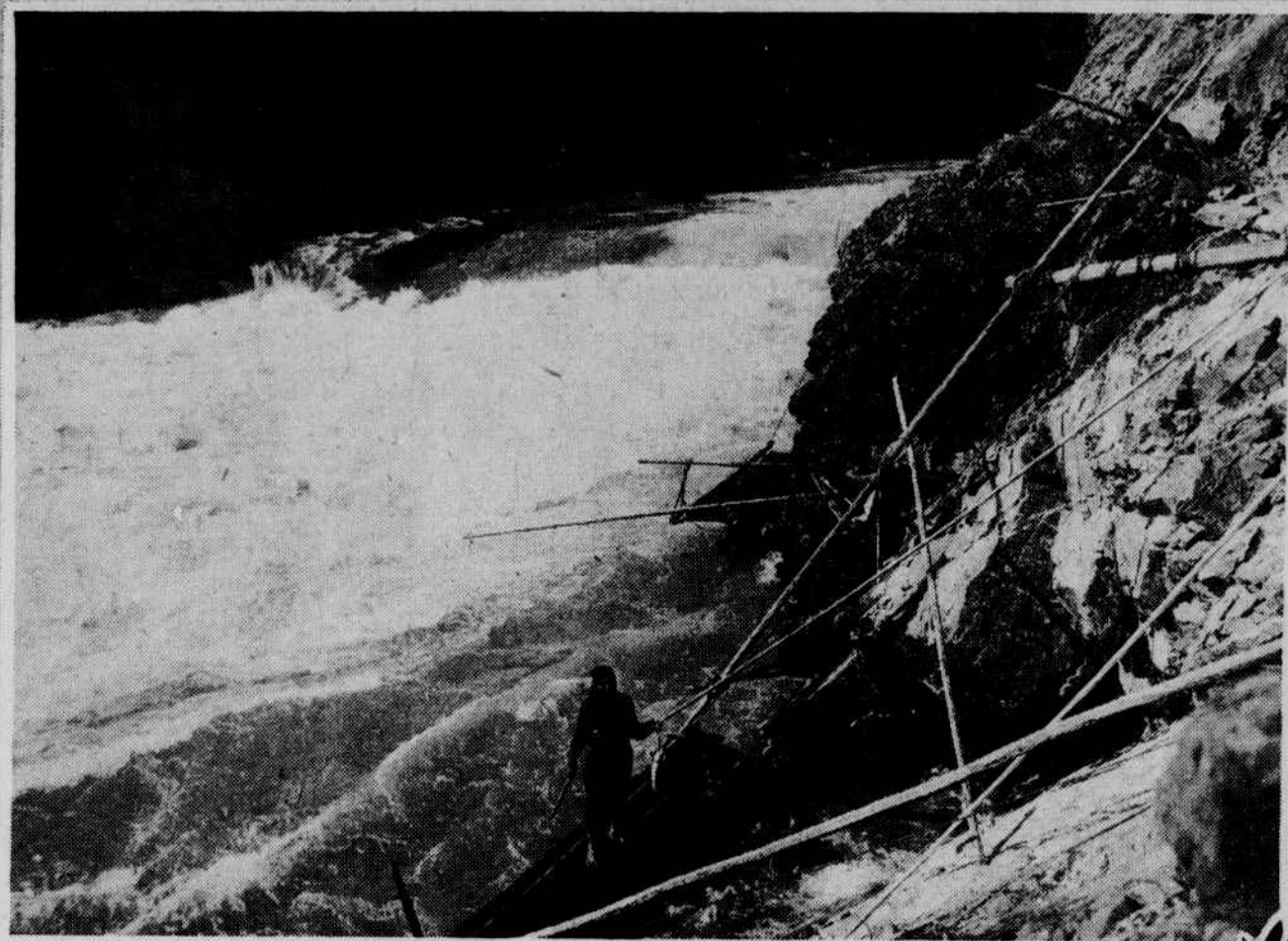


JASPER PARK, CANADA'S WONDER SPOT OF MOUNTAINS

Snowy peaks, peacock colored lakes that glisten with the lustre of metallic pigments; cataracts, some as high as Niagara, that thunder over precipices or plunge down through narrow canyons amidst primeval forests—these are features of a landscape in Jasper Park, Canada, to be seen nowhere else in America except on the Pacific coast or in lower Alaska.



Vacation Paradise Draws Thousands Yearly, Many of Them Americans—A Woman's Own Story of the Placid Lakes and Nature Beauties She Saw

By AGNES C. LAUT.

CANADIANS will always resent just a little, if only subconsciously, the fact that the majority of work-jaded denizens in the great cities south of the boundary persist in thinking of Canada as a great northern playground of emerald and turquoise lakes, of rainbow cataracts and mighty rivers, of evergreen forest with game and fish unharmed by the fear of man, rather than the great granary of the wheat world.

When I first began to camp in the Banff and Lake Louise sections of the northern Rockies, twenty years ago, fewer than 8,000 tourists a year came into those regions. Last year more than 75,000 American tourists visited and played in this section of the Rockies alone, and if Canada stopped to figure it out she would find that American tourists yearly spend in the Alpine playgrounds of Switzerland and Italy from \$200,000,000 to \$300,000,000—equal to the Dominion's boasted aggregate of wheat.

It was when the Canadian transcontinental were being constructed some ten years ago that the Dominion Government decided to set aside for a perpetual playground of game and humans over 4,400 square miles of snowy peaks and emerald lakes and cataracts countless, just where the railroads plunge from the ascending foothills through Yellow Head or Jasper Pass into the heart of the most majestic Rockies.

Right where the pass opened through the wall of the mountains to the headwaters of both the Columbia and the Fraser one old fur trader bearing the name of Jasper House and possessing a great thatch of yellow hair and yellow beard pleased to exchange canoes for horses and dogs to go through the pass. On the other side of the pass he paused again to exchange dogs and horses for canoes to descend to the Pacific. While he paused he built cabins for fur trade.

The new fur post became known as Jasper House, and the pass the Indians called Yellow Head after the fur trader. All this was between 1796 and 1810. Later came a whole procession of the old fur trade worthies.

Various Ways for the Tourist To Reach Northern Playground

Jasper is some thirty-eight to forty hours west from Winnipeg; but you can reach it even quicker by cross cutting from Chicago diagonally through St. Paul to Moose Jaw. Only if you wish to see the great Buffalo Park of Wainwright, east of Edmonton, your easiest route is over one of the two national railroads, when you can drop off at Wainwright en route, and catch the next train to go on to Jasper, one night's travel further west.

The Buffalo Park has an area of 260 square miles, fenced in by high netted wire, as the frontiersmen say: "Hog proof, bull strong and horse high." Across the park some other fence lines separate the cows and their wabbling babies from the main herd, the young elk from the big males and mothers, and if possible to keep out the hungry coyotes. Good motor roads run all through the park.

Jasper Village is only a mountain hamlet in the lap of 4,400 square miles of hoary, snowy peaks and peacock colored lakes that glisten with the lustre of metallic pigments, and cataracts, some high as Niagara, that thunder over the precipices or down through darksome, narrow canyons, and primeval forests—such forests as you see nowhere else in America except on the Pacific coast and in lower Alaska. Where the burn has not run, as on the trail to Tonquin and Maligne Lake, the heavy conifers give a shade that is a gloom almost impenetrable to sunlight. You have to follow by the cork-screw trails up to the higher Alpine meadows to get into sunny areas.

Within two years there will be a large railroad hotel built at Jasper. For the present you can get accommodations in several ways. You can write ahead to Col. Rogers, the Government administrator of the park,

and he will secure you accommodation in one of the village homes. Or you can go to one or two tent cities and have your own army tent, eating in a general messroom. One is run by a private camping outfit, the other by the Y. M. C. A. Or you can write ahead to one of the big independent outfitters, like Otto Brothers, and they will supply you with horses and camp outfit and erect your tent wherever you want to camp. Or, better still, if you have only a day to spend and know how to build a pine and fir bed for yourself so it won't feel like stumps in the middle of your back, one of Col. Rogers's game wardens will pilot you to any of the Government rest log cabins that dot all parts of the park.

In these cabins are tin stoves, axes and water buckets. All are, of course, built in proximity to water for the fire wardens, who may have to camp in them for weeks. Telephones connect all the cabins with Jasper village. There you may camp by yourself in greater comfort than under a tent, cook your own meals, and fish, or rest, or play, or climb; and the expense will be exactly the cost of your food. On the whole you will be more comfortable than tented on the low ground of the valley, for the night mists without fur rugs to draw round you or a tent stove to dry the damp out of your tent, are far more chilling than the frosty air from the upper snows, where I have slept on a pine bed with no covering but my riding togs. To be sure, you hear the bears come prowling and sniffing, but they can't get in and do not molest unless molested.

When I reached Jasper I slept for three days and three nights, with never a sound to waken me except the nicker of the camp horses calling their colts, or the bark of the coyotes back in the burnt timbers, or the solemn lullaby of the pines, with the soul of the sea in their hushed chant. Afar at midday I could hear the boom of the waterfalls in Maligne Canyon, so called by the old French trappers because it was such hard hunting. I had gone to the Y. M. C. A. camp and had a cot bed, and while cot beds give one a sense of not sleeping on the ground among bugs and slugs and ants and things, they are neither as springy nor as dampproof as two feet of fir or pine under you.

Then I sat up and began to look round



Lake Edith Cavell, renamed to commemorate the English martyr nurse executed by the Germans in Belgium. On the right is the Edith Cavell Peak.

Jasper. Believe me, it is quite a look is 4,400 square miles of snowy peaks like Edith Cavell and Robson and Hardisty; of emerald lakes with the coppery sheen of a peacock's tail; and cataracts where the white-foamed, wild-haired, water nymphs play mad tricks in the rainbow spray of the midday sun.

The first thing that struck me about Jasper was its peculiar resemblance to the emerald greens and snowy opalescence of the Banff-Lake Louise region further south and to the majestic panoramic fiery tints of the great mountain amphitheatres of Colorado Canyon far south. It has the coloring of the one and the vast mountain areas of the other.

There were lazy days rowing on the emerald lakes, with the snowy mountains casting a replica in the clear depths, where one wondered was there a noisy Eastern city called New York at all. There were quiet days on the edge of stupendous gorges, where you could drop a pebble down 300 feet and see it bounce from side to side of the narrow rock wall, where the frozen water nymphs raved and raced down this long course to Arctic seas. There were leisurely

drives round chains of lakes, all of the same exquisite peacock lustre as those lakes in the Upper Alpine Meadows of Colorado, or a Crater Lake in Oregon.

My best memory of Jasper is one night a woman friend and I slept on the top of Signal Mountain. We had gone up on horseback, and the panorama below us had such a curiously beautiful resemblance to Grand Canyon that I wanted to see it by sunset and sunrise, as I have seen the Colorado in its mystic, changing moods.

We saw the sun set at 10 at night and rise at 4 in the morning over a wild amphitheatre of mountains and rivers and forests for an area of 600 miles. I shan't attempt to describe the colors. They were all the prismatic colors of the rainbow done up in permutations and combinations that shifted every second.

We left at 6 in the morning to walk down. It was like the way down Angel Trail of Grand Canyon, only with the two differences that the tang of the north is of ozone and ice; and except at sunrise and sunset the pigments of the north are in grays and greens and opalescent pinks. In contrast

to the warm air of the south and the fiery coloring of the desert like nothing else on earth.

The trail corkscrewed down in swift circles. First we were on the roof of the world, where the lakes below looked like green jewels, and Old Man Mountain had his chin wreathed in cloud whiskers—pink whiskers, too—when the sunrise sent a slant through them. You could see where the Athabasca roared down to the Arctic and at another angle where a marshy mere marks the head waters of the wild Fraser in its terrific drive through the adamant rocky canyons to the Pacific. You could see the cup-like dip in the mountains, where another stream forks to the Saskatchewan and so down to Hudson Bay. Jasper Park is really the birthplace of three great river systems, the Arctic, the Pacific, the Atlantic. I am sorry it can't claim the Mississippi, but it can't.

Above the timber line the air was cool, the trail soft padded black mould broken by boggy mossed holes, where a mountain spring clogged our footsteps but compensated by giving us fresh drafts of the sweetest fresh water on earth—the water from the upper snows. Then we were into the light brushwood with the berries sought by the wandering black bear and grizzlies.

We were too busy watching our footsteps to think much of the hungry bear foragers till we got down into the big timbers, where a fire of twenty years ago left a wild tangle of fallen giants and young trees. By this time we had come down about twelve miles. I swear it felt like a hundred and twenty. Where the fire had felled the big trees the new growths didn't shelter our heads from the reflection of the blazing sun against the rocks. We had shed our coats, and they weighed a ton each. So did our feet. Then we shed our collars. Then we shed everything sheddable. We were both horribly "wet" and ghastly "dry" when we came to a bubbling spring in cool shade right by a great soft mossed log.

I sat right down on that log. I kept sitting on that log. We both swore we wouldn't get up off that log for a million dollars; and we drank of that cool spring with the abandon of "wets" in a dry, dry land.

From the time we sat down a little Douglas squirrel had mounted a pine tree behind us and sworn at us in every language he knew.

His skurr-r-r was becoming, bolder and bolder. He was darting nearer and nearer us, with every hair of his fur stiff with frenzied rage.

"I think I'll get up," said my friend.

"I think I will, too," I answered.

We both did get up. Her eyes and mouth were open wide. So were mine. It was an old log on which we had been sitting. One mossed end had reverted to dust and ants' eggs; but either of us would have let the

ants cavort over us in millions before we would have budged. That wasn't it. The log had been ripped freshly open—very freshly, not ten minutes before we came—you could see the great rake, and right in the trail dust and muck mould were the marks of a giant palm with the fingers of a great hand—the tracks of a bear we had disturbed at his breakfast, and doubtless he was watching us from cover of the windfall, where the little squirrel was going into fits of fury.

We didn't wait to thank that squirrel. We beat it; and we followed the tracks of that bear clear down to the main road two miles, and three more miles in the dust of the main road right into the Y. M. C. A. camp, where the rascal had invaded the cook tent the night before and stolen all the bacon and the contents of the apricot pot.

The bear brings up a lot of questions from the would-be camper seeking rest and play in Jasper.

As to fear of wild animals while you sleep, forget it! Don't put your "grub" bag in your tent, but cache it in trees where it can't be reached; and the smell of the fire will fill animal marauders with as much desire to avoid you as you have to avoid them. A few such nights, knowing you are safe, and you will realize the sense of fear—which is one of the most destructive factors of health—is one of the first things outdoor life cures.

What It Costs to Make

A Trip to Jasper Park

How much will it cost? Just what you make it cost plus your fare from whatever point you start—from \$125 to \$150 for return fare from Atlantic coast cities, less from the middle West. At the camp, or tent cities, from \$18 to \$21 a week; in the cabins, where you cook your own meals, just what you make it, from \$4 to \$10 a week. Horse hire is extra, of course. You can build a log cabin of your own with a veranda and slide windows and sailor berth beds for \$200, or a three room cabin for \$300. Motors pass the door every day.

As to equipment, dress just as you would dress to play round your own farm, or dig in your own garden or play golf! You don't need to advertise the fact you are a terrible guy by coming out loaded like an arsenal or garbed like a sporting shop's wax man or woman in the window. The camper is like the soldier—his well being depends on his feet and his stomach—so remember these special requirements.

Silk may be preferable underwear for gentle usage, but it is a menace in camp. It retains moisture and will give you rheumatism. Wear wool, or half wool, or halbrigan. The dressing gown you don at night should be warm and have a high rolling collar, for where the winds come down from the snows you will have a crick in your neck unless you place something between your bare neck and the pillow.

Should you wear bloomers, or skirts or what?

Whatever you have found suits you best; but in this big timber country only a hard twilled, resistant surface like a hired man's blue jumpers or a child's rompers will resist the catch and snare of those stabbing under branches.

I admit the matter of a camp bed that is comfortable, especially if you have pitched tent near the upper snows or in a valley where the chilled mists lie at night, is difficult unless you know how to do it; and not one camp outfitter in ten knows how to do it.

Nothing but fur below and above will keep you warm in such quarters. Therefore a big rug is the first requirement. The second is the build of your bed. If the ground is damp—you cannot always choose your camping ground—the first layer of the big branches to give spring to your bed should not be less than two or three feet deep; and note well—for here lies the great secret—the branch end must be at the outer edge of the bed, the soft foliage ends overlapping exactly in the middle where you lie. On top of this should be eighteen inches of the softest, finest branches in foliage you can find. No cot bed can equal this for comfort, for the simple reason no cot bed mattress can keep out the cold of midnight.



Opalescent whites and emerald greens in the foreground, with majestic panoramic, fiery tints of giant mountains—these make features of the scenery of Jasper Park. This particular scene is Pipestone Creek.